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ABSTRACT

To the traditional arguments for teaching children to read can be added the contemporary idea that literacy is a tool, the necessary skill for full participation in society, and the ticket to social mobility and success. New reasons for reading books have emerged from recent gains in the understanding of the comprehension process and the nature of language and language learning. However, students whose sole exposure to reading is through stories in the basal readers encountered in most schools are not likely to develop much interest in reading. In a sampling analysis of school children, book reading time emerged consistently as the best predictor of fifth-grade comprehension, vocabulary size, reading speed, and gains in comprehension between second and fifth grade. If the goal of a more literate America is to be achieved, children must be given opportunities to read, motivation to read, and access to books, a vital ingredient. Many children do not have books at home, and the presence of a variety of books in school classrooms is absolutely crucial to reading development. Learning to read must be viewed as the process of acquiring the reading habit, and literacy must be viewed as the regular exercise of reading skills through reading books. (NKA)

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF READING

Reading Education Report No. 63

CHILDREN'S BOOK READING HABITS: A NEW CRITERION FOR LITERACY

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Children's Book Reading Habits:

A New Criterion For Literacy

> Education . . . has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading.
>
> English social history
> George Macauley Trevelyan

Throughout history, concern about reading and writing skills has ebbed and flowed. In this country, particularly over the last 30 years or so, the tide in reading has been rising. Years of seeming decline in SAT scores, a growing awareness of adult illiteracy, outcries about phonics, and management by objectives schemes are all symptoms of the persisting interest in reading. The current emphasis in school instruction, however, has been an explicit focus on the component skills of reading rather than on reading itself.

According to data in the Reading Report Card, one might imagine that American schools are doing an effective job of teaching reading skills (NAEP, 1985). The decline in SAT scores has levelled off. More minority children especially seem to be learning to read. Progress is still needed in teaching the intermediate and advanced level skills, but the picture is generally positive: Achievement test scores are rising.

Are test scores the only standard by which to evaluate the efficacy of school reading programs? Ought we not have some concern about the kinds of reading Americans are doing? From our

own research, it appears that Trevelyan's observation about British education, quoted above, may well be true in America today.

Test scores are an indicator of how well students perform some reading skills taught in school. By no means, however, are test scores a sufficient predictor of whether students actually read. Our research over the last five years, in fact, shows only that those who can read may. Many don't.

Why shouldn't school reading programs be evaluated on the basis of their out-of-school outcomes--on the amount of real reading students do, on how many books, magazines, newspapers, even comic books, that students read in a year? Why shouldn't the level of literacy in America today be measured not only by test scores, but by the amount of reading that Americans actually do?

In this paper first we will review the traditional arguments and the new research base for why children should develop good book reading habits. Second, we will provide a summary of our investigations of the amount of book reading children do outside of school. We found positive, replicable relations between the amount of-out-of-school book reading and test scores. Third, we will point out briefly some of the social and educational implications of our findings. Finally, we will discuss the importance of access to books for developing children's reading habits.

Why Should Children Read Books?

> Books are not men and yet they are alive,
> They are man's memory and his aspiration,
> The link between his present and his past,
> The tools he builds with.
>
> They burned the books
> Steven Vincent Benet

Books are the respository of all knowledge, the storehouse of the wisdom of the ages. Books have been a unique and powerful means of passing on the heritage of world culture. When we read books, we transcend local boundaries of space and time and broaden our experience of the world. Not only do we open ourselves to the ideas of others; we also have the possibility of direct encounters with the great minds of history. These are the traditional arguments for teaching children to read.

A more contemporary aspect of these arguments is the idea that literacy is a tool. Reading opens the door to vast arrays of new information. Access to more information gives people the power to make better decisions. People who read well are better informed consumers and voters. They have more control over their lives and the possibility of making a greater number of choices. Reading, thus, is the necessary skill for full participation in our society, the ticket to social mobility and success.

New reasons for reading books have emerged from recent gains in our understanding of the comprehension process and the nature of language and language learning.

Perhaps the most important of the new findings is the role of prior knowledge in reading comprehension. It is now well established that prior knowledge is one of the most powerful influences on how well a reader comprehends (see Wilson & Anderson, 1986, for example, for a summary of the research in this area). The research on the influence of prior knowledge also provides a justification for the cultural heritage argument: The more that readers already know, the better they will comprehend.

Several different kinds of prior knowledge are relevant to improved comprehension: knowledge of content, knowledge of form and structure, and knowledge of genre conventions. More reading of informational texts leads to a more extensive background of general content knowledge. Students who know more are better prepared to read new material. This applies to literature, as well as to exposition. When students read good stories, they learn that the basic content of stories concerns characters who experience a conflict or dilemma and then attempt to resolve it. The more stories they read, the more students learn about the form and structure of story plots. The more argumentative texts students read, the greater their knowledge of techniques of rhetoric, of the form and structure of argumentation. Reading particular genres leads to more specific expectations of other texts of the same genre. Students who read mysteries, for example, soon learn that the information about the crime is

presented incompletely, and out of order, and that their job is to try to infer and reconstruct the correct order.

Once readers have had several encounters with a content area, a type of text structure, or a literary genre, they no longer have to expend as much attention or effort to comprehend the features they have learned. They have formed what cognitive psychologists call a schema, a mental structure representing information that has already been learned. One of the main functions of a schema is to free up cognitive resources for other tasks, such as comprehending the new information in future texts.

Trade books offer opportunities for building richly elaborated schemata that go considerably beyond those offered in most school books. Bruce (1984) compared trade books and adapted stories in basal readers on literary qualities. The basal stories had fewer plot complications, less character conflict, and less insight into the goals and motives of the characters. Many scholars of reading believe that there is an added consequence of the impoverished stories that are found in school books: They are less interesting and more difficult to understand. Students, as a result, learn less from them about real stories and are less likely to be interested in reading other stories voluntarily. In other words, students whose sole exposure to reading is through school books are not likely to develop much interest in reading.

In addition to their basal readers, students today make considerable use of content area textbooks. There are problems with content area textbooks as well: Anderson & Armbruster (1984) and Armbruster and Gudbrandsen (1986) have analyzed a number of popular content area texts and find that often they are no more than lists of facts without thrust or direction. Our own observation is that the expository structures taught in freshman composition and technical writing courses around the country--analysis by division into parts, analysis by temporal sequence, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, problem and solution--are singularly lacking in school textbooks and for no good reason. Students are more likely to encounter well written exposition in trade books than in their school books, so it is vital that they have the chance to develop their book reading habits. Only in this way will they learn about the most salient characteristics of good exposition.

As we noted above, there are linguistic reasons why children should read books. Two important areas of influence are syntax and vocabulary growth. There are marked differences between spoken and written language in both syntax and vocabulary. Spoken language has different and, most frequently, simpler syntax. Less time is spent planning spoken language; connectives and subordination, therefore, are less elaborate. In addition, speakers stop, start, and readjust on the basis of how their

listeners respond. They can repeat and rephrase based on immediate and sometimes non-verbal feedback.

Written language, however, takes more time to produce. It is more composed, and precisely because of this, its syntax can be much more complex. Children who are read to from an early age, then, are at an advantage when it comes to learning to read in school because they are already familiar with the language of written texts. Similarly, children who read more continue to gain more exposure to written language and, thus, find it easier to deal with the more advanced books and textbooks they encounter in their later years. These children, in fact, may find their school textbooks too easy, or (what is worse) boring.

One particular feature of written language of great practical import for young learners is the difference in vocabulary between oral and written language. Linguists refer to this difference in terms of the type-token ratio. Think of each different word in a text or utterance as a type. There are as many types as there are unique words. Each new occurrence of a word is a token. In an oral language utterance, there are relatively fewer types and relatively more tokens than one would typically expect to find in a written text of the same length. In other words, there are fewer different words, and they are repeated more often in oral language. The direct consequence of this is that children who read more are much more likely to

encounter new and different words; they are therefore more likely to learn more new words and to have larger vocabularies.

A recent synthesis of evidence on vocabulary growth (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985a) suggests that between grades 3 and 12, children learn about 3000 new words per year. Some they learn from the oral environment and some from instruction in definitions in school. Learning directly from definitions, though, is a notably inefficient method of gaining vocabulary: To gain 3000 new words in a year, students would have to memorize about 15 definitions per day--an unpalatable and probably unwise method of building vocabulary. Nagy, et al. tested the immediate influence of reading connected text on vocabulary growth. In a replication, (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985b), they examined the delayed (after six days) influence of reading on growth in knowledge of word meanings. They estimated, on the basis of their two experiments, that learning from written texts may account for a third or more of the words acquired annually by school age children. Their results suggest that getting children to read more should be an effective means of promoting vocabulary growth regardless of grade or ability. Book reading, then, should be considered a major source of vocabulary growth.

In this section, we have noted some traditional and contemporary arguments for the value of reading. In addition, we have summarized the new research evidence leading us to expect that more book reading will contribute to growth in knowledge of

content, text structure, genre, syntax, vocabulary and, we argue, to growth in reading ability. The questions now, however, are how much reading do children do; is there a direct relationship between amount of reading and reading proficiency; and how much reading is optimal? These we will address in the next section.

Measuring the Amount and Effects of Children's Reading

How use doth breed a habit in a man.

The two gentlemen of Verona
William Shakespeare

Previous research on children's reading has suffered from imprecision: Both the amounts of time that students were allowed to indicate, and the interval of time over which habits were measured were limited. The relationship of amount of time reading and time spent on other activities to reading achievement was seldom studied. To overcome these problems, we allowed for amounts of time precise to the minute, instead of providing a few choices spanning wide ranges of time. In addition, we measured over long periods of time--8 and 26 weeks--instead of 1 day, 2 day, or 3 week intervals. And we related activity times to achievement test scores, vocabulary size, reading speed, and growth between second and fifth grade.

We studied two different samples of students: 53 students from two fifth grade classes in a small rural town filled out a daily activity form for 8 weeks between early March and mid May; 105 students from five fifth grade classes in a larger mid-

western city filled out a similar daily activity form for 26 weeks between mid November and mid May. Preliminary tests showed no differences between the two samples. The two data sets were then combined for all future analyses.

The activity form the students completed was constructed on the basis of discussions with the two classes in the first sample about what they did out of school. We told them that we were doing a science project (a concept with which they could identify) about what kids do out of school, because we believed that school could be made more interesting if we knew more about what kids really like to do. The form was revised on the basis of their suggestions after a trial run of several days.

For the second sample, the form was revised slightly. See Figure 1 for a copy of the form used by the second sample. On this activity form, time spent going out was divided into going out to a place and hanging around with friends. Also, distinctions between informal games, rule oriented games, and sports were made more explicit.

Insert Figure 1 about here.

Television watching, going out, and dinner times were normally distributed. Most of the activity times, however, were positively skewed. This means that there were some children who did them a lot and many children who didn't do them very much.

To adjust the activity time variables before analysis, all were corrected with the transformation logarithm (average mins. + .5). With this transformation most of the time, variables were normalized satisfactorily. See Figure 2 for a comparison of the times children reported for selected activities.

Insert Figure 2 about here.

The evidence on amount of reading reveals a bleak picture. Book reading time was the most positively skewed of all the activities; most children read very little. The mean book reading time of approximately 10 minutes per day is deceiving. Only a relatively avid reader, a child at the 70th percentile reads as much as 10 minutes a day. The median, 4.6 minutes per day, represents a much more typical amount of reading. Our samples, as we will indicate shortly, were somewhat about average in ability and thus read a little more than average. The likely significance of our data on book reading is that 50% of American fifth graders probably read from books for 4.6 minutes per day or less. About 10% of the children we surveyed never read from a book during the entire interval of our survey.

The range of book reading times was quite considerable. It was surprising enough to find that a child at the 70th percentile reads more than twice as much as one at the 50th percentile. But a child at the 98th percentile reads almost 3 times as much as

one at the 90th percentile, 65 minutes versus 21.2 minutes. If the differences in television and dinner time were as great as this, the 98th percentile child would be watching television 24 hours a day, and spending six of those hours eating dinner.

An even more relevant comparison can be made using the distributions of reading times and test with an absolute top score of 100. Assume that children's test scores are distributed similarly to book reading times. Then the following differences would be true. If a child at the 98th percentile scored a true 98 on the test, a child at the 90th percentile would, by extrapolation, score 33. The 70th percentile child would score 17, the 50th percentile child would score 8, and 15% of the children would score 0.

The point we wish to make in comparing the two distributions is this: If there were a perfect correlation between ability to read and amount of reading, reading time and reading achievement would have identical distributions. Children who could read well would all read a lot. Unfortunately, reading ability and reading time are not distributed identically. Many children get reading scores which indicate that they are learning reading skills, but not many are doing much reading. Although many can read, very few do.

When reading time and reading speed data are combined, we can compute directly the child's annual volume of exposure to written language. The 10th percentile child will read fewer than

10,000 book words, the 50th percentile child about 310,000 words, and the 98th percentile child about 4,600,000 book words in a year. These truly staggering differences in magnitude are all the more important because of the relationship between book reading time and measures of reading proficiency.

Fifth grade reading ability was measured with tests of comprehension (the metropolitan Comprehension sub-test), vocabulary (a checklist test developed by Anderson & Freebody, 1983), and reading speed (our own test). Grade 2 reading scores were retrieved from school files in order to relate activity times to changes in reading proficiency. The students were somewhat above average in reading ability: The second grade total reading mean was at about the 70th percentile, and the fifth grade mean was at about the 63rd compared to national norms.

To test the influence of activities on reading proficiency, we did separate regression analyses for each of the dependent variables. Book reading time emerged consistently as the best predictor of fifth grade comprehension, vocabulary size, reading speed, and gains in comprehension between second and fifth grade. Its influence was, of course, uniformly positive. On the measures of fifth grade status, its influence ranged from 8.8% of the variance in speed, to 10% of the variance in vocabulary, to 15.6% of the variance in comprehension. There were some positive effects associated with time spent eating dinner and going out

and negative effects associated with listening to music, doing chores, and talking on the phone. We should also point out that there was no significant negative influence of television watching for up to about 10 hours per week. None of the significant effects that we did find were either as consistent or as strong as the positive effect of book reading.

The relationship between book reading time and second to fifth grade test score gains needs some additional explanation. Book reading time (i.e. the students' fifth grade book reading habit) accounted for 3.4% of the total variance in reading achievement gains. This may seem like a relatively small influence. In this case it is necessary to understand how the gain score analysis was done. First, we determined the influence of second grade reading on fifth grade reading. That amounted to 58.4% of the variance. So, of the original 100% of the variance, 41.6% remained. Book reading time accounted for 8.2% of this remaining variance. We found, in addition, that magazine and newspaper reading was positively related to speed gains, and comic book reading was positively related to vocabulary gains.

In total, the proportion of variance explained by out-of-school activities was sizable: 42% of the variance in comprehension, 39% in vocabulary, and 32% in speed. We did not have data that would allow a direct comparison of the extent of the influence of in-and- out-of-school factors (we are now engaged in new research focused on that issue). Nonetheless, the

size of the influence and the positive effect of book reading time have clear and definite implications for how to achieve a more literate America. We will speak of these implications in the rest of the paper.

Social and Educational Implications

> Failure to learn to read is the educational equivalent of cancer.
>
> Testimony before Congress.
> Richard C. Anderson

The first important point to be made about our findings is the extent to which out-of-school activities contribute to reading achievement. The influence we found is quite considerable. Schools can assume only part, not all, of the responsibility for the reading achievement and the literacy of American children. Literacy is not just an educational issue, it is a social issue. And test scores, which reflect limited aspects of the influence of schooling, cannot be relied upon as the sole indicator of the literacy of American children. Our society needs a much clearer focus on data that can be more readily interpreted than test scores: the amount of time chidlren spend reading, and the numbers of books they read.

The Reading Report Card data cited earlier (NAEP, 1985) reveals that many American students are still deficient in the intermediate to advanced level reading skills, like making generalizations, analyzing and integrating less familiar material, and extending or restructuring ideas from specialized

and complex texts. This is to be expected given the current instructional emphasis on low level, or "basic" skills of reading. We believe that students are more likely to acquire the advanced skills when they read more books. Books afford students the very best opportunity to practice everything involved in the act of reading.

With our two diverse samples of students, book reading time emerged as the best predictor of reading achievement. From these results, we can predict that many children's reading achievement scores would go up if they spent more time reading books. In particular, our analyses suggest that for the child who is not reading at all, an average of as little as 10 minutes per day reading books could lead to a gain in the range of 15 percentile rankings on a standardized test of reading achievement. In fact, all but the most avid readers would derive measurable academic benefits from more book reading. This, we feel, is the compelling reason why parents, schools, and our society at large should adopt the goal of helping all students to develop life long book reading habits. If America's children read more books, America would be considerably more literate.

Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading, contains a recommendation that every American should support:

> Priority should be given to independent reading. Two hours per week of independent reading should be expected by the time children are in the third or fourth grade. To do this, children need ready access

> to books and guidance in choosing appropriate and interesting books. Reading should emphasize works that represent the core of our cultural heritage. (p. 82)

How may this goal be accomplished? There are three general factors we can identify: opportunities to read, motivation to read, and access to books. Parents, schools, and public and private initiatives can all play a role. We give the following examples as possibilities that all concerned citizens should be aware of.

Here are some suggestions for parents. Help your children spend more time reading. Buy them books, or take them to the library. Talk with them about what they are reading and about what you are reading. Let them see you reading; let them see that you value reading. This will affect their motivation to read. Above all, make sure that your children have adequate opportunities to read.

Opportunities to read are sometimes hard to come by. Most children lead busy lives. Reading is something, that will have to be fitted in between going out, watching television, listening to music, doing chores, and the many other activities that compete for chidlren's time. A regular time when the child can read, and is expected to read, could make a big difference. Extending the idea of the bedtime story might be one reasonable alternative. The last half hour of the day, children can read in their bedroom or turn out the light and go to sleep. Many children, we think, will choose to read.

Schools can help by setting an example and by providing opportunities and motivation. Principals can read aloud to the whole school. Teachers can visit each others classes to do story reading and thus make it a special event. Teachers can schedule time for their students to do sustained silent reading and for children to talk with each other about books. We believe that this book sharing time is important because our interviews with avid readers reveal that they valued having a supportive community of readers with whom to share book experiences.

School wide motivation programs--readathons to raise money for library books, bookworms made of paper plates (one for each book read), challenges between classes--can be very successful. A principal in Ohio, for example, challenged his school to make a monkey of him by reading 9,000 books; when they met the challenge, he came to school dressed in a gorilla outfit. American schools could use more of this kind of positive spirit. Another school in Illinois includes parents in their reading motivation effort. The parents read with the children every evening and sign a form verifying how much reading has been done. For every 250 minutes they read, children can put a leaf on the school Reading Tree in the gym. In the second year of this program, it looks like the students will do more than twice as much reading as in the first year.

Private companies like Pizza Hut, McDonalds, and the Great America Corporation, and charities like the Multiple Sclerosis

readathon, have sponsored reading motivation programs that coordinate with local schools. We hope that they will continue and that more companies and organizations will adopt such worthy practices. At issue here is social responsibility: Schools cannot do it all on their own. Children need encouragement to read from all fronts, particularly in the areas of their lives where they enjoy going, like fast food restaurants and amusement parks. Given the amount of time children spend watching television, its role could be especially important. The Public Broadcasting System's Sesame Street, the Electric Company, and Reading Rainbows, and the CBS-Library of Congress's collaboration on Read More About It are good beginnings. Similar efforts from other networks and individual stations would certainly be helpful in encouraging children to read more.

There is a definite need for research on how television can be a positive influence in the intellectual growth of American children. More reading materials related to children's favorite programs is one possibility. More varied vocabulary and more substantial content in children's programs surely would not be harmful. Reading role models and the interest and value of reading could be consistent themes in children's programming. Publicly minded advertisers should push for such changes.

For avid readers like us, reading is, in many instances, its own reward because we have the habit. Also, reading plays an important functional role in the conduct of our professional

lives. We are fortunate to have a good reading habit to rely on. However, when we told the children in our two samples that school could be more interesting if it integrated more of what they really like to do, we struck a responsive chord for many of them. When children don't already have the reading habit--when the book bug has not yet bitten them--it is difficult for them to make reading a functional part of their lives. Opportunities to read and motivation from a variety of sources are necessary, but not sufficient, for building children's book reading habits. We think that immediate access to books is the vital ingredient. This is what we will address in our final section.

The Importance of Access to Books

> The book which you read from a sense of duty, or because for any reason you must, does not commonly make friends with you.
>
> My literary passions
> William Dean Howells

Reading Is Fundamental has done wonderful work getting books into the hands of individual children. But more is needed. We think that the presence of a variety of books in school classrooms is absolutely crucial to reading development. Here are our reasons.

Many children do not have books at home. They are not familiar with books, nor do they have the habits of handling, examining, and choosing books. They visit the public library seldom, if ever. Perhaps they go to the school library every few

weeks with their class. Our observation of library visits is that often it is the children who already can read who get the books the librarian talked about. Children who are not habituated to books don't know how to browse through several books in order to find one that they might like. They may well be intimidated by the sheer number of books in the school library, and they have little opportunity to acclimate because, typically, they are not allowed into the school library except during the classroom library period.

The centralized control of books, infrequent classroom visits to the library, access to the books regulated by the school schedule, and a lack of multiple copies of the books the librarians talk about, little assistance in finding and choosing books, and no one to talk with about books are all factors that inhibit the less than avid reader from getting involved in books. Children should have books close at hand. They should have frequent opportunities to see, handle, and examine the books, and somewhat at their own discretion. They should be able to talk spontaneously with other children about the books they are reading and to find books that they are truly interested in reading. The only way to accomplish this is to have a collection of books in every classroom.

There are school systems fortunate enough to be able to buy books for every classroom. Many school administrators, though, may wonder where the books are going to come from. Selections of

50 books from the school library can circulate through classrooms on a rotating basis. This ensures a variety of books without additional cost and has the added advantage of drawing the students' attention each time a new selection arrives. When the school library is inadequate, collaborations with public libraries may be possible. We know, also, of a school in Illinois without a library where a determined principal and some enthusiastic teachers, parents, and students managed to beg, borrow, and scrounge several thousand books in a single year. We personally like the idea of the students themselves helping to build the library collection. What better way to motivate their interest in books!

How to run a classroom library requires some thought. Morrow's (1985) research on classroom libraries is a good starting point for workable procedures. She proposes setting off a corner of the classroom with provisions for book displays and quiet nooks where students can escape the classroom hurly burly to do some private reading. She also argues for incorporating follow-up activities using art and drama, for example, to give students the chance to express something of what they have gained from reading. More research is needed in this area. The efficacy of the activities Morrow recommends, for example, could be tested empirically. Our intuition that it is a good practice to have the children themselves involved in managing and

maintaining the classroom library is another topic that ought to be addressed.

Last year we began researching classroom libraries by undertaking a "book flood" project. A book flood is, literally, an inundation of books into a classroom. Elley and Manghubai (1983) and Ingham (1981) have already reported some positive effects of book floods. Five publishers of paperback books--Avon, Bantam, Dell, Penguin, and Scholastic--donated books. We placed libraries of about 250 books in 10 central Illinois classrooms; the teachers gave us a commitment to provide 70 minutes per week of sustained silent reading time. We recruited eight other classrooms as controls. For all classrooms, we did pretest and posttest measures of reading proficiency and periodic measures of amount of in-school and out-of-school reading.

While the analysis of this project is still in progress, we can mention some preliminary results. As expected, the library classes did substantially more in-school book reading. The presence of the library was related also to gains in vocabulary knowledge. It appears, too, that by the end of the year the library classes were doing more out-of-school book reading; they were also doing more magazine and newspaper reading. We were delighted to see this transfer effect. A good school reading development program must affect the reading habits, as well as the reading achievement, of the children in it. Our preliminary results, thus, are entirely positive. Immediate access to books

in school can help children to become more avid readers out of school. We look forward to reporting more definitive findings about the importance of immediate access to books.

Conclusion

> Good habits gather by unseen degrees,--As brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas.
>
> Ovid, Metamorphoses --
> John Dryden

No reasonable person could argue the value of learning to read. The point of this paper is that learning to read is not just a matter of mastering a few simple skills, nor is literacy just a matter of passing a reading test. Learning to read must be viewed as the process of acquiring the reading habit. Literacy must be viewed as the regular exercise of reading skills through reading books. The time honored reasons why children should read books are now bolstered and supplemented by new research evidence that book reading can make a unique and powerful contribution to children's reading ability.

Our society, then, must provide all possible encouragement and opportunity for children to read books. Access to books is a necessary condition for becoming a good reader. Reading itself is the key to literacy. Helping America's children to build lifelong reading habits must now be regarded as a true national priority.

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FRIDAY ____ when I was not in school I spent the number of minutes I have indicated doing each of the following activities.

Name _____
Date _____
Class _____

1. ____ mins. on a (practice/lesson) for _____

2. ____ mins. going out to _____

3. ____ mins. hanging around with my friends at _____

   This is what we did: _____

4. ____ mins. on chores. 5. ____ mins. reading mail from _____

6. ____ mins. reading a newspaper (w/r) about _____

7. ____ mins. working on my hobby called _____

8. ____ mins. eating dinner. 9. ____ mins. listening to radio.

10. ____ mins. reading a magazine called _____

11. ____ mins. listening to (records/tapes) 12. ____ mins. watching TV.

13. ____ mins. on the phone. 14. ____ mins. playing a game called _____

15. ____ mins. reading a book called _____

16. ____ mins. doing my homework: ____ mins. reading it; ____ mins. thinking about it; ____ mins. for writing or doing it.

17. ____ mins. reading comic books called _____

18. ____ mins. doing _____
(something we left out)

19. I went to bed at ____ p.m.

FIGURE 1

STUDENT ACTIVITY FORM

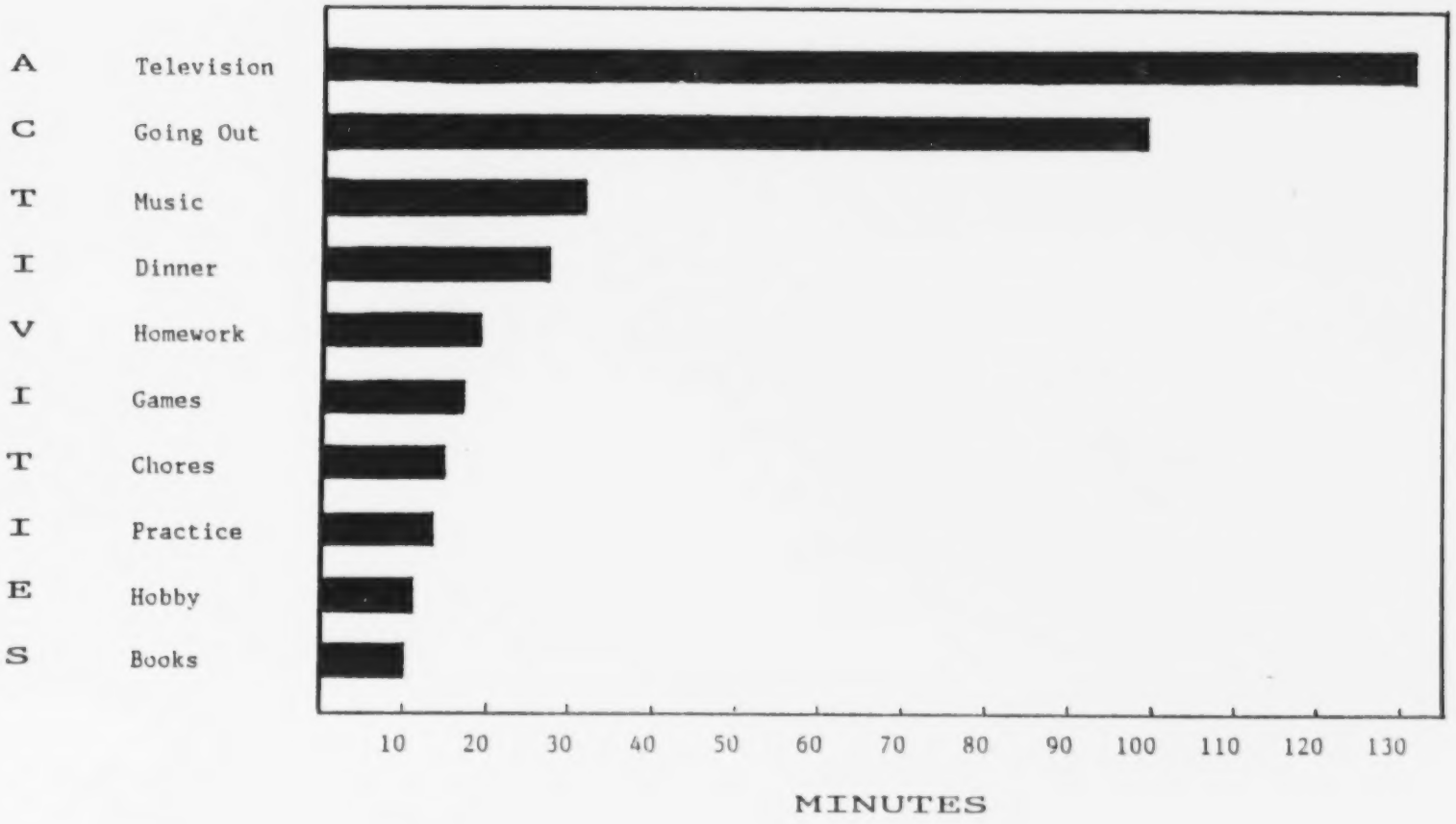

FIGURE 2

MINUTES PER DAY FOR
SELECTED ACTIVITIES